

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 11141 01 OF 02 030721Z POSS DUPE
ACTION EA-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7956
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANILA 11141

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, RP
SUBJECT: ENRILE LISTS INTERNAL THREATS AND REVEALS NEW
ORGANIZATION

1. SUMMARY: IN A PRESENTATION TO THE INTERIM BATASANG
PAMBANSA MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE ENRILE LISTED THE
INTERNAL THREATS FACING THE PHILIPPINES. STARTING WITH
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES/MARXIST-LENINIST
(CPP/ML) HE MOVED THROUGH THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM INCLUD-
ING FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC RIGHTISTS IN HIS CATALOG OF
THREATS TO THE CURRENT REGIME. ENRILE ESTIMATED THE
STRENGTH OF THE CPP/ML AND ITS MILITARY ARM, THE NEW
PEOPLES' ARMY, AT 9,000 WITH A MASS BASE OF 85,000. HE
INDICATED THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVES IT REMAINS A POTENT
THREAT DESPITE THE CAPTURE OF ITS LEADER JOSE MARIA
SISON IN 1977. IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES ENRILE
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PAGE 02 MANILA 11141 01 OF 02 030721Z POSS DUPE

REVEALED THE GOVERNMENT IS FACING 20,000 MNLF, INCLUDING
13,000 REGULAR COMBAT TROOPS. ENRILE CHARGED THE CHURCH
WAS A POTENTIAL BASE FOR SUBVERSION AND THAT SOME
CLERICS, WITTINGLY OR UNWITTINGLY, WERE ALREADY HELPING
SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS. THE RIGHTISTS, BOTH IN THE
PHILIPPINES AND IN THE U.S., ARE COMPOSED OF OLD LINE
POLITICIANS AND ECONOMIC OLIGARCHS. THEY HAVE BEEN

ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION AGAINST THE REGIME. ENRILE REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME THE EXISTENCE OF A NEW SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATION OF "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS." THOUGH ANTI-COMMUNIST IN CHARACTER, IT TOO HAS AN ARMED UNIT AND DESIRES TO OVERTHROW THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE LATTER REVELATION ENRILE'S LIST OF INTERNAL THREATS CONTAINED LITTLE NEW. HE APPEARS TO HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY OVERSTATED THE NUMBER OF COMMUNIST INSURGENTS WHILE UNDERESTIMATING THE NUMBER OF MNLF. HIS REPORT ON THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS PRESENTS SOMETHING OF A PUZZLE. WHILE THERE MAY IN FACT BE SUCH A GROUP, THE GOP PROBABLY HAS OVERESTIMATED ITS STRENGTH AND THE THREAT IT POSES. END SUMMARY

2. IN PRESENTATION TO INTERIM BATASANG PAMBANSA JUNE 15 MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE ENRILE OUTLINED VARIOUS INTERNAL THREATS FACING GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES (GOP). GOP CONSIDERS THREATS EMANATE FROM COMMUNIST, MUSLIM SECESSIONIST, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND RIGHT WING ORGANIZATIONS. HE SPOKE ALSO OF A GENERAL INCREASE IN CRIMINALITY. ENRILE IDENTIFIED COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES/MARXIST-LENINIST (CCP/ML), WITH ITS MILITARY ARM THE NEW PEOPLES ARMY (NPA), AND MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF) AS MOST IMMEDIATE THREATS TO THE GOVERNMENT. ENRILE ESTIMATED THE STRENGTH OF THE COMMUNIST ELEMENTS AT 9,000 TROOPS WITH A MASS BASE OF 85,000. CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MANILA 11141 01 OF 02 030721Z POSS DUPE

WHILE NOTING THERE HAS BEEN A "GENERAL DOWNWARD TREND" IN ARMED INCIDENTS INVOLVING THE NPA AND A "SHARP INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF COMMUNIST CASUALTIES" THE CCP/ML-NPA'S ORGANIZATION REMAINS INTACT, DESPITE THE CAPTURE OF ITS LEADER JOSE MARIA SISON. IT HAS SUCCESSFULLY ESTABLISHED ALLIANCES WITH "THE YOUTH AND STUDENT SECTOR, PROFESSIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL GROUPS, LABOR UNIONS AND RIGHTIST AND RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS." ENRILE ALSO CHARGED THE CPP/ML-NPA HAVE "FORGED AN ALLIANCE WITH THE SECESSIONIST REBELS IN THE SOUTH, CALLING FOR...OPERATIONAL EXPEDIENCIES AT THE TACTICAL LEVEL."

3. MNLF. ON THE MINDANAO CONFLICT, ENRILE ESTIMATED THE MNLF'S STRENGTH TO BE 20,000 INCLUDING 13,000 ARMED REGULAR TROOPS. HE INDICATED THAT MOST OF THE FIGHTING IS OCCURRING IN SULU (JOLO), BASILAN, THE ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA, MAGUINDANAO, COTABATO AND LANAO PROVINCES. FROM THE START OF THE CEASEFIRE ON JANUARY 20, 1977, UNTIL MAY 31, 1978, ENRILE CLAIMED THERE HAVE BEEN A "TOTAL OF 2,067 VIOLATIONS BY THE TERRORISTS, INCLUDING 224 AMBUSCADES, 143 RAIDS AND ATTACKS, 508 HARASSMENTS, 261 LIQUIDATIONS/KIDNAPPINGS AND OTHER, AND 931 ENCOUN-

TERS." ENRILE REFERRED TO THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE RECENT ISLAMIC CONFERENCE AND ADMITTED MNLF LEADERS HAVE HAD "CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS IN THEIR DIPLOMATIC MOVES. LATELY THEY ALLEGEDLY DECIDED TO INVITE A UN FORCE TO ENFORCE THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES."

4. CLERICS AND RIGHTISTS. ENRILE DEFINED RELIGIOUS ACTIVISTS AS "CLERGY WHO, IN THE PURSUIT OF THEIR RELIGIOUS OBJECTIVES, HAVE, WITTINGLY OR UNWITTINGLY, FORGED ALLIANCES WITH OR ARE BEING USED BY SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE CPP." HE CALLED THE CLERGY A

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 MANILA 11141 02 OF 02 042337Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MANILA 11141

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

"POTENTIAL BASE FOR SUBVERSION" BECAUSE OF ITS TRADITIONAL INFLUENCE, ITS WELL DEVELOPED ORGANIZATION, THE ORGANIZATIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL SKILLS OF ITS MEMBERS AND THE "CONSIDERABLE FINANCIAL SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM LEGITIMATE DONORS." ACCORDING TO ENRILE "CAPTURED DOCUMENTS OF THE CPP/NPA SHOW THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY ARE ACTIVE SUPPORTERS OF THE MOVEMENT." ENRILE CHARGED THE RIGHTISTS ARE "LOCAL AND FOREIGN-BASED FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, BUSINESS TYCOONS AND POLITICAL WARLORDS WHO BANDED THEMSELVES SOON AFTER THE DECLARATION OF MARTIAL LAW INTO TEMPORARY ALLIANCES." THE GROUP IS

LOOSELY ORGANIZED AND DOES NOT HAVE A SINGLE LEADER. IT ATTEMPTS TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION "THROUGH SUSTAINED PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF PROPAGANDA MATERIALS IN THE COUNTRY AND ABROAD, SPECIFICALLY IN THE US WHERE FILIPINO RIGHTIST ELEMENTS APPEAR MORE ORGANIZED." ENRILE IDENTIFIED THE US-BASED RIGHTIST GROUPS AS THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MANILA 11141 02 OF 02 042337Z

MOVEMENT FOR A FREE PHILIPPINES, AND THE ANTI-MARTIAL LAW COALITION AND THE UNION OF DEMOCRATIC FILIPINOS.

5. SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. ENRILE CLAIMED THAT THE GOP HAS UNCOVERED THE EXISTENCE OF A NEW SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATION, THE NAGKAKAISANG PARTIDO DEMODRATIKO SOSYALISTA NG PILIPINAS (NPDSP, UNITED FILIPINO DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST PARTY). THOUGH NON-COMMUNIST, THE NPDSP'S OBJECTIVE IS THE LIBERATION OF THE PHILIPPINES THROUGH "PARTY BUILDING, UNITED FRONT FORMATION AND ARMED STRUGGLE." ACCORDING TO ENRILE THE NPDSP HAS ITS OWN MILITARY COMPONENT, CALLED THE SANDIGAN. AFFILIATED WITH THE NPDSP ARE THE KATIPUNAN NG BAYAN PARA SA KALAYAAN (KABAKA-PEOPLE'S LEAGUE FOR FREEDOM), KATIPUNAN NG MGA MARALITANG TAGA-LUNGSOD PARA SA KALAYAAN (NATIONAL LEAGUE OF URBAN POOR FOR FREEDOM), AND KATIPUNAN NG MGA KLERIKO AT RELHIYOSO PARA SA KALAYAAN (LEAGUE OF CLERICS AND RELIGIOUS FOR FREEDOM).

6. CRIME. ENRILE REVEALED THAT A STUDY COMPARING THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1 TO MAY 31, 1977 WITH THE SAME PERIOD THIS YEAR SHOWED THAT "CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS INCREASED BY 44 PERCENT, CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY BY TWO PERCENT WHILE CRIMES AGAINST CHASTITY DECREASED BY TWO PERCENT."

7. COMMENT: FOR THE MOST PART ENRILE'S REPORT TO THE IBP REFLECTED THE INTERNAL SECURITY CONCERNS WHICH HAVE ANIMATED THE GOP SINCE THE DECLARATION OF MARTIAL LAW IN 1972: THE COMMUNISTS, THE RADICAL CLERGY AND THE MUSLIM REBELS. ENRILE'S APPRAISAL OF COMMUNIST AND MNLF STRENGTH WAS CONSISTANT WITH THE CURENT GOP LINE THAT THE NPA AND CPP/ML STILL ARE A POTENT THREAT WHILE THE GOVERNMENT HAS SUCCEEDED IN LIMITING THE ABILITY OF THE MNLF TO FUNCTION; HOWEVER, WE CONSIDER ENRILE GROSSLY OVERSTATED THE NUMBER

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PAGE 03 MANILA 11141 02 OF 02 042337Z

OF NPA TROOPS, WHICH WE ESTIMATE NUMBER APPROXIMATELY 2,200-2,400(REFAIR), AND UNDERESTIMATED THE NUMBER OF REGULAR, FULLY ARMED MNLF, WHICH PROBABLY APPROACHES

20,000.

8. OF GREATER INTEREST, HOWEVER, WAS ENRILE'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW AND SUBVERSIVE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION, COMPLETE WITH A MILITARY ARM. ENRILE'S REVELATION, WHICH WAS SUPPORTED THE FOLLOWING DAY BY PRESIDENT MARCOS, PRESENTS A MAJOR CONUNDRUM. OUR PRELIMINARY VIEW IS THAT A DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION MAY IN FACT EXIST, BUT THAT THE GOP HAS PROBABLY GROSSLY EMBELISHED ITS STATE OF DEVELOPMENT, ITS STRENGTH AND ITS WILLINGNESS TO USE VIOLENCE TO ATTAIN CHANGE IN THE PHILIPPINES. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS ORGANIZATION AND WILL REPORT FURTHER. MURPHY

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